



NEWS RELEASE



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture - Washington Agricultural Statistics Service
Post Office Box 609 - Olympia, Washington 98507 - Phone: (360) 902-1940

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Contact: Joe Parsons (360) 902-1940
nass-wa@nass.usda.gov

SWEET CHERRY PRODUCTION DOWN 20 PERCENT NATIONALLY

OLYMPIA, Wash., June 23, 2005--U.S. sweet cherry production is forecast at 226,550 tons, down 20 percent from 2004 and 8 percent below 2003. Beginning with this 2005 forecast, Pennsylvania is no longer in the sweet cherry estimating program. The Washington crop forecast of 120,000 tons is unchanged from the June Crop Production report. The crop is 10 percent below the record high production of 2004 but 2 percent above the crop of 2003. Washington's crop experienced poor weather during bloom that hindered bee activity and pollination. Frost during April was also a problem. Fruit set is reported to be lighter than last year as many growers are reporting smaller fruit clusters. Production in California is forecast at 45,000 tons, 38 percent less than last year. The California forecast is carried forward from the June 1 forecast. A series of heavy, late-season storms caused problems for this year's cherry crop. The rains hit at the peak harvesting time for cherries in the southern San Joaquin Valley and the excess moisture caused some splitting and cracking. Oregon production is forecast at 29,000 tons, down 17 percent from the previous forecast and 33 percent below 2004. Oregon sweet cherries experienced an early spring in February until bloom in March, when rain, wind, and frost killed off many blooms. Some orchards in the Willamette Valley were hit hard and those growers may declare a crop failure.

The Michigan crop is forecast at 27,000 tons, 9 percent above the 2004 production and more than double the 2003 crop. A large crop with heavy fruit set is developing due to warm temperatures and good pollination.

Idaho is expecting a sweet cherry crop of 2,200 tons, down 29 percent from last year and 24 percent below 2003. Production is forecast to be down from recent years due to a cool spring which hampered pollination but high quality fruit is reported.

U.S. tart cherry production is forecast at 244 million pounds, 15 percent above 2004 production and 8 percent above production in 2003. Beginning with this 2005 forecast, Colorado is no longer in the tart cherry estimating program. Michigan, the largest producing State, expects a crop of 190 million pounds, an increase of 28 percent from the 2004 crop and up 23 percent from 2003. Fruit set is variable across the State but is better than last year in most areas. Leaf canopy is very good. Dry conditions have led to low disease pressure, so potential fruit quality is excellent but sizing may be reduced. Utah production is forecast at 19.0 million pounds, compared to 22.0 million pounds produced in 2004 and 26.0 million pounds in 2003. Frost reduced crop potential. Washington expects to produce 18.0 million pounds of tart cherries in 2005, up 3 percent from 2004 but 10 percent less than 2003. No major problems have been encountered but scattered spring frosts

occurred in some areas. New York is expected to produce 7.50 million pounds, 30 percent less than the 2004 crop but 4 percent above 2003. Heavy snow cover caused some tree damage, while cold, rainy weather during bloom reduced crop potential. Wisconsin production is forecast at 6.40 million pounds, 4 percent below 2004 and 52 percent below the 2003 production. Poor weather during pollination reduced yield potential. Pennsylvania expects to produce 2.70 million pounds of tart cherries, 10 percent below 2004 and down 31 percent from 2003. The trees wintered well, but a strong bloom was accompanied by cool conditions that hampered pollination. Oregon's crop forecast of 0.60 million pounds, is an 85 percent decrease from last year's crop and 57 percent below 2003. Rain, wind, and frost during bloom devastated this year's crop. If realized, this production is a record low.

**SWEET CHERRIES: TOTAL PRODUCTION BY STATE & UNITED STATES
2003-2004 AND FORECASTED 2005**

| STATE | TOTAL PRODUCTION | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| | TONS | | |
| California 1/ | 65,600 | 73,000 | 45,000 |
| Idaho | 2,900 | 3,100 | 2,200 |
| Michigan | 13,000 | 24,700 | 27,000 |
| Montana | 2,060 | 2,360 | 1,300 |
| New York | 600 | 900 | 950 |
| Oregon | 41,000 | 43,000 | 29,000 |
| Pennsylvania 2/ | 340 | 400 | |
| Utah | 2,200 | 1,600 | 1,100 |
| Washington | 118,000 | 133,000 | 120,000 |
| TOTAL | 245,700 | 282,060 | 226,550 |

1/ Forecast carried forward from "Crop Production" released June 10, 2005.

2/ Estimates discontinued in 2005.

**TART CHERRIES: TOTAL PRODUCTION BY STATE & UNITED STATES
2003-2004 AND FORECASTED 2005**

| STATE | TOTAL PRODUCTION | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 |
| | Million Pounds | | |
| Colorado 1/ | 0.4 | 0.2 | |
| Michigan | 154.0 | 149.0 | 190.0 |
| New York | 7.2 | 10.7 | 7.5 |
| Oregon | 1.4 | 3.9 | 0.6 |
| Pennsylvania | 3.9 | 3.0 | 2.7 |
| Utah | 26.0 | 22.0 | 19.0 |
| Washington | 20.1 | 17.5 | 18.0 |
| Wisconsin | 13.3 | 6.7 | 6.4 |
| TOTAL | 226.3 | 213.0 | 244.2 |

1/ Estimates discontinued in 2005.

To access the entire release, including the complete narrative and tables point to
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/wa/press/swtchery.pdf>

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